



Pre-School Admissions Policy – September 2021

Statement of Intent

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from the local community. We aim to ensure that all sections of our community have access to the setting through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

Procedures

- We ensure that the existence of our setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- We ensure that information about our setting is accessible, in written and spoken form and, where requested, in more than one language. Where necessary, we will try to provide information in Braille, or through British Sign Language.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms of how it treats each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion, ethnicity or from English being a newly acquired additional language.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms of how it enables children and/or parents with disabilities to take part in the life of the setting.
- We monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that our intake is representative of social diversity.
- We make our Equal Opportunities Policy widely known.
- We consult about the opening times of the setting to ensure we accommodate a broad range of family need.
- We are flexible about which sessions families choose for children to attend (where capacity allows) to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing these do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the setting that provides stability for all the children.

In order to achieve this, we operate the following criteria for Admissions:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order; children who have spent time in care while living in other countries;
2. Children who appear to Sharnbrook Academy Federation to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted;
3. Children already attending the Pre-School as of previous July (guaranteed their current sessions as a minimum);
4. Medical Grounds;

5. Siblings currently attending the Pre-School;
6. Have a confirmed Reception place at Great Ouse Primary Academy;
7. Has parents working at the Pre-School;
8. Distance. In the case of all being equal, the 'Distance' criteria, as applied by the Local Education Authority, will be the 'tie-breaker'.

Any child seeking a placement at the Pre-School is eligible to start at the beginning of the term after which they turn 3 years.

We will arrange our waiting list in birth order, with priority given to ensuring that children who receive nursery education funding are allocated their full entitlement before places are offered to younger children.

Each term, admissions paperwork will be issued to those families on our waiting list where children qualify for entry in the following term (with a cut-off date for reply) and sessions will then be allocated according to birth order and in line with funded hours allocation (15 hours/30 hours).

If there are more children than places available, then it may be necessary to limit the number of sessions per child per week.

Each term, once the cut-off date for admissions paperwork has passed, returned applications will be processed for session allocation according to birth order and families advised accordingly.

Each term following the process to allocate sessions in the previous clause, all families (existing & those starting the next term) will be advised of sessions within the pre-school that has surplus spaces to allow parents to 'book' additional sessions. This may mean that families exceed the funded hours allocation and separate charges will apply (see fee schedule). This communication will include a cut-off date for reply and sessions will then be allocated according to birth order. This process may then be repeated if there is still surplus space in any individual session, and we will communicate with all the families in the round above PLUS all families on the waiting list where the child is 3 years old.

For families not on the waiting list requiring an immediate pre-school place, applications for children eligible to immediately start at the pre-school (age of at least the term after they turn 3 years) will be considered **AFTER** the term waiting list process has been completed but **BEFORE** the surplus place process had been initiated. At later points in any term, applications from any eligible child (at least 3 years old) would be processed on receipt.

Families requesting to defer pre-school places will be considered on an individual basis and requests should be made directly to Great Ouse Primary Academy.

The pre-school will not allocate a place where Sharnbrook Academy Federation incurs any financial loss (e.g. if funded hours are not yet available) or where funding allocation rules may be breached.

Parents may place an appeal with the Appeals Panel (consisting of members of the SAF Board not involved in the day-to-day running of the Pre-School) if they consider that there has been an unfair implementation of the stated Admission Policy when allocating places.

The number of children we can accept at Pre-School is governed by Ofsted regulations and ratios.

Notes

Looked after children:

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions (see the definition in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A previously looked-after child is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted immediately after being looked after.

A child 'subject to an adoption order' includes all children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

Adopted children, for the purposes of admissions priority, also include children subject to the following orders immediately after being looked after:

A 'child arrangements order'; or

A 'special guardianship order'.

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half-brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the pre-school at the time of the application and be likely to remain in the pre-school at the proposed date of admission.

A child's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent(s) or guardian(s) with parental responsibility with whom the child usually lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents at more than one address, the address used will be the one at which the child is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. Proof of residency in a catchment area can be requested. If this occurs, one of the following will be required: a copy of a utility bill, a child benefit statement or family tax credit information – none of the documents provided should be more than three months old.

If any of these documents cannot be supplied because of a house move, then one of the following must be provided:

- Confirmation that the house purchase is legally binding (a solicitor's letter to confirm completion will be sufficient)
- Formal tenancy agreement showing that parent will be resident at the proposed address for at least 6 months.

The definition of 'Staff' is any member of staff employed by Great Ouse Primary Academy pre-school, either full or part time who has been employed for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made.

Reviewed September 2021

Next Review September 2024